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MOTION

Streets are the public living room of a community. If designed for people and community they create the public spaces that create neighborhood identity and character and support economic activity and social interaction. The City of Cincinnati's Streets Policy should support economic and social development and improve the character and identity of neighborhoods by providing more transportation options and creating more user-friendly streets; and promoting transportation solutions that complement the context of the community and better integrate land use and transportation investments.

Using funds previously allocated in the 2009-2010 budget passed in December 2008 for the Neighborhood Transportation Strategies and Innovative Transportation Strategies projects, the Department of Transportation and Engineering (DOTE) is now preparing a citywide streets policy.

We move that DOTE develop a Complete Streets/Great Streets policy that incorporates the following guiding principles and practices so that transportation improvements are planned, designed, and constructed to encourage walking, bicycling and transit use while promoting safe operations for all users, and facilitate placemaking.

1. All users includes pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles.
2. The safety, convenience and comfort of motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, transit riders and members of the surrounding community will be accommodated and balanced when planning and designing streets, except where pedestrians and bicyclists are prohibited by law from using a given facility or where construction of bikeways or walkways would be unsafe or impractical.
3. The policy will encompass all types of transportation and development projects, including all new roadway projects and major reconstruction projects, through all phases of a project, including design, planning, maintenance and operations, for the entire right-of-way.
4. Transportation improvements will include an array of facilities and amenities that are recognized as contributing to Complete Streets/Great Streets, including: street and sidewalk lighting; pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements; access improvements, including compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act; public transit facilities accommodations, including pedestrian access improvements to transit stops and stations; street trees and landscaping; drainage and green infrastructure; and street amenities.

Examples of transportation improvements that should be considered in Complete Streets/Great Streets guidelines include: Wider sidewalks; curb extensions and bumpouts; road diets; roundabouts; raised intersections; median refuge islands.

5. Complete Streets/Great Streets may be achieved through single projects, or incrementally through a series of smaller improvements or maintenance activities over time. The City's policy should treat all transportation improvements as opportunities to create safer, more accessible streets for all users and integrate Complete Streets/Great Streets planning into all types of projects, including new construction, reconstruction, rehabilitation, repair, and maintenance.
6. All sources of transportation funding should be drawn upon to implement Complete Streets/Great Streets, in order to leverage existing transportation dollars, minimize the cost of new facilities, and reduce the need for retrofits. Maximum financial flexibility is important to the implementation of Complete Streets/Great Streets principles.


We further move that the Complete Streets/Great Streets policy and related standards and guidelines include the following elements:

- Defines street types and place types.
- Replaces the conventional "functional classification" system with street design types that link street type, land use and urban form
- Provides design standards and guidance for each street design type, including land uses and urban design elements that can best complement each type of street, so that street design and land use and urban design decisions reinforce each other
- Includes a method for analyzing design elements from different user's perspective, and ways to quantify levels/quality of service for pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users
- Provides for documentation of how tradeoffs are weighed, and establishes a collaborative process to ensure that all stakeholders' perspectives are adequately considered
- Ensures that street and land-use decisions are mutually reinforcing; establishes a process that defines existing and future land use and urban design context, as well as existing and future transportation context, for projects, in order to align transportation and land use goals to support strong, livable neighborhoods
- Emphasizes network connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes
- Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of exceptions
- Directs the use of the latest and best design standards while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs
- Involves all City departments that have a stake in street design, including Planning, Community Development, MSD, Economic Development, Fire, Parks, and Public Services
- Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes
- Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy, including steps to: Restructure procedures to accommodate all users on every project; rewrite standards and design manuals to encompass the safety of all users; retrain staff in balancing the needs

of diverse users; and create new data collection procedures to track how well the streets are serving all users

We further move that the Complete Streets/Great Streets policy be integrated into the Comprehensive Plan, Bicycle Plan and Form-Based Codes initiatives now underway.

We further move that DOTE report to Council on the Complete Streets/Great Streets Policy by November 2009.


Roxanne Qualls, Councilmember

STATEMENT

Streets are the public living rooms of our communities. An essential component of public space, streets also play a major role in establishing the image and identity of a city, and provide the framework for current and future development.

For decades, street design has emphasized moving cars *through* neighborhoods, instead of treating our neighborhoods as destinations. Cities around the country are now recognizing the benefits of designing streets for people and places instead of cars. Re-thinking our street design offers an opportunity to improve our local economy, environment, and public health.

Cincinnati's streets policy should work to preserve and enhance the unique compact, walkable competitive advantage of Cincinnati's neighborhoods by recognizing that city streets are more than corridors for traffic flow. Streets are valuable civic spaces that must be designed and managed to allow access to pedestrian, bicycling, and public transportation users; support neighborhood business districts by reducing real (not posted) traffic speed and enhancing pedestrian access; and improve safety. The City's approach to streets should recognize that the street is about more than just speed and mobility. It is a critical part of the public realm and is an

essential element in creating a sense of place. If designed properly, its elements can enhance property values, create social space, and facilitates multiple modes of travel.

Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe, convenient and comfortable access and travel for all users, so that pedestrians, bicyclist, motorists and transit riders of all ages and abilities are able to safely and comfortably move along and across a Complete Street.

A **Great Streets** approach recognizes that the street is more than just about speed and mobility, but is a critical part of the public realm and an essential element in creating a sense of place. Great Streets can transform a corridor into a place that is memorable, compelling, and desirable to visit, and reposition the street as a vital neighborhood asset. Great Streets trigger economic and social benefits by centering communities around interesting, lively and attractive streets that serve all modes of transportation.

Fifty-four local governments across the country, including Columbus, have adopted Complete Streets legislation and policies. A total of 98 government jurisdictions are committed to Complete Streets. More information is available at www.completestreets.org.

Why Great Streets?

Great Streets can potentially exist anywhere – downtowns, residential neighborhoods, employment centers and so forth. What are Great Streets? The key characteristics to look for include:

- 1 **Great Streets are representative of their places.** A Great Street reflects the neighborhood through which it passes and has a scale and design appropriate to the character of the abutting properties and land uses.
- 2 **Great Streets allow people to walk comfortably and safely.** The pedestrian environment on, along and near the street is well-designed and well-furnished. The relationship between the street and its adjacent buildings is organic, conducive to walking, and inviting to people.
- 3 **Great Streets contribute to the economic vitality of the city.** Great Streets facilitate the interaction of people and the promotion of commerce. They serve as destinations, not just transportation channels. They are good commercial addresses and provide location value to businesses that power the local economy.
- 4 **Great Streets are functionally complete.** Great Streets support balanced mobility with appropriate provision for safe and convenient travel by all of the ground transportation modes: transit, walking, bicycling, personal motor vehicles and freight movement.
- 5 **Great Streets provide mobility.** Great Streets strike an appropriate balance among the three elements of modern mobility: through travel, local circulation and access. The right balance varies with the function of the street and the character of its neighborhoods and abutting properties.
- 6 **Great Streets facilitate placemaking.** Great Streets incorporate within them places that are memorable and interesting. These may include plazas, pocket parks, attractive intersections and corners, or simply wide sidewalks fostering an active street life.
- 7 **Great Streets are green.** Great Streets provide an attractive and refreshing environment by working with natural systems. They incorporate environmentally sensitive design standards and green development techniques, including generous provision of street trees and other plantings and application of modern storm water management practices.

Source: St. Louis Great Streets Initiative, East-West Gateway Council of Governments